

Session 1-2

Quality Assurance of Transnational Programs in East Asia: Monitoring of the “CAMPUS Asia” Programs

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Abstract

The Japanese, Chinese, and Korean governments launched a new trilateral initiative called “CAMPUS Asia” from 2011, for promoting exchange and cooperation among the three countries’ universities. The initiative funds “quality-assured” exchange programs by consortiums of the three countries’ universities. As a pilot initiative for cooperative quality assurance (QA), QA agencies from the three countries intend to start monitoring funded programs in the East Asia region. In this presentation, the monitoring process in Japan will be shown. Taking into account the diversity of national QA systems, monitoring will be separately conducted by the three countries in the first phase, and the results will be compared to develop common QA guidelines. In Japan, a domestic survey on QA for current transnational joint programs was conducted to determine monitoring criteria. This presentation clarifies which criteria are significant for QA of transnational education.

1. Launch of “CAMPUS Asia”

As economic activities in the East Asia region become more interrelated, human resource development on a regional scale is becoming important. In the second Japan-China-Korea trilateral summit in 2009, then Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama proposed launching a new initiative for promoting exchange and cooperation among the three countries’ universities; this initiative was later named “CAMPUS Asia (Collective Action for the Mobility Program of University Students).” In 2011, this initiative selected ten joint programs by consortiums of the three countries’ universities. Some joint programs now already started short-term student exchanges and some are planning to establish double-degree programs after two to three years.

For the East Asia region, quality assurance (QA) of transnational education is a new challenge. Although student mobility has been high in the region, and as of 2011, 87,533 Chinese and 17,640 Korean students are studying in Japan as shown in Table 1, not many collaborative programs have been established because of language barriers and differences in academic calendars. In 2009, 727 Chinese and 54 Korean students came to Japan and only 96 Japanese went to China and 24 went to Korea for studying in joint/double degree programs. Thus, there has been no special focus on transnational collaborative program in Japanese accreditation criteria.

Table 1 Student mobility in East Asia

		China	Korea
Number of foreign students studying in Japan (2011)		87,533	17,640
In joint/double degree programs (2009)	Number of Inbound Students to Japan	727	54
	Number of outbound Students from Japan	96	24

Source: Japan Student Services Organization

http://www.jasso.go.jp/statistics/intl_student/data11.html

MEXT http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/koutou/shitu/1287263.htm

CAMPUS Asia initiative has stressed the importance of QA for transnational education. Three governments formulated “Guidelines for Exchange and Cooperation among Universities in China, Japan and Korea with Quality Assurance”; these were used for reference while selecting programs. Contemporaneously, the Japan-China-Korea Quality Assurance Council (comprising Japan’s National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation, China’s Higher Education Evaluation Center of the Ministry of Education, and Korea’s Korean Council for University Education) was launched in 2010 to discuss collaborative ways

for facilitating QA among the three countries. Subsequently, the council proposed the monitoring of programs in CAMPUS Asia as a pilot cooperative QA activity.

2. Coordinated monitoring of transnational education programs

As the selected ten consortiums were all composed of flagship universities from the three countries, it was considered that an approach focusing on minimum QA might be ineffective. In this context, it was agreed that monitoring would be designed with a view to (1) identify good practices of high quality transnational education and common issues, disseminating them, and (2) develop common guidelines regarding QA of transnational education for QA agencies.

Regarding the framework for monitoring, it was deemed difficult to have as the first step a joint QA conducted by an international committee representing the three countries because of differences in QA cultures, language barriers, and the workloads of review committee for traveling across three countries. It was agreed that the monitoring process would be carried out in two phases over five years. The first will be implemented separately by the three countries' QA agencies in 2013. The results of the first round will be compared, and the possibility that all three countries will mutually understand and recognize the results will be examined by a joint committee of three QA agencies. At the same time, good practices of transnational education will be identified and widely shown. In addition, common guidelines for external QA of transnational education will be developed in collaboration with three agencies. The next round of monitoring will be designed on the basis of a discussion in the first round of monitoring; this may comprise separate monitoring based on the common guidelines or joint monitoring by an international committee.

3. Japanese method for pilot monitoring of programs

To conduct separate monitoring, NIAD-UE took an approach of evidence-based criteria formation. In other words, NIAD-UE conducted a domestic survey with universities on current activities by collaborative programs and the survey results were used for designing monitoring criteria.

In the survey, collaborative programs were asked whether they are conducting activities that seem to be important for QA of collaborative transnational education. The activities include: understanding of credit system in partner universities, sharing syllabus, provision of dormitories, etc. The survey also asked respondents' views/opinions on the degree of significance of the activities for QA of collaborative education.

Respondents were 99 joint programs. Fig 1 shows the average value of the

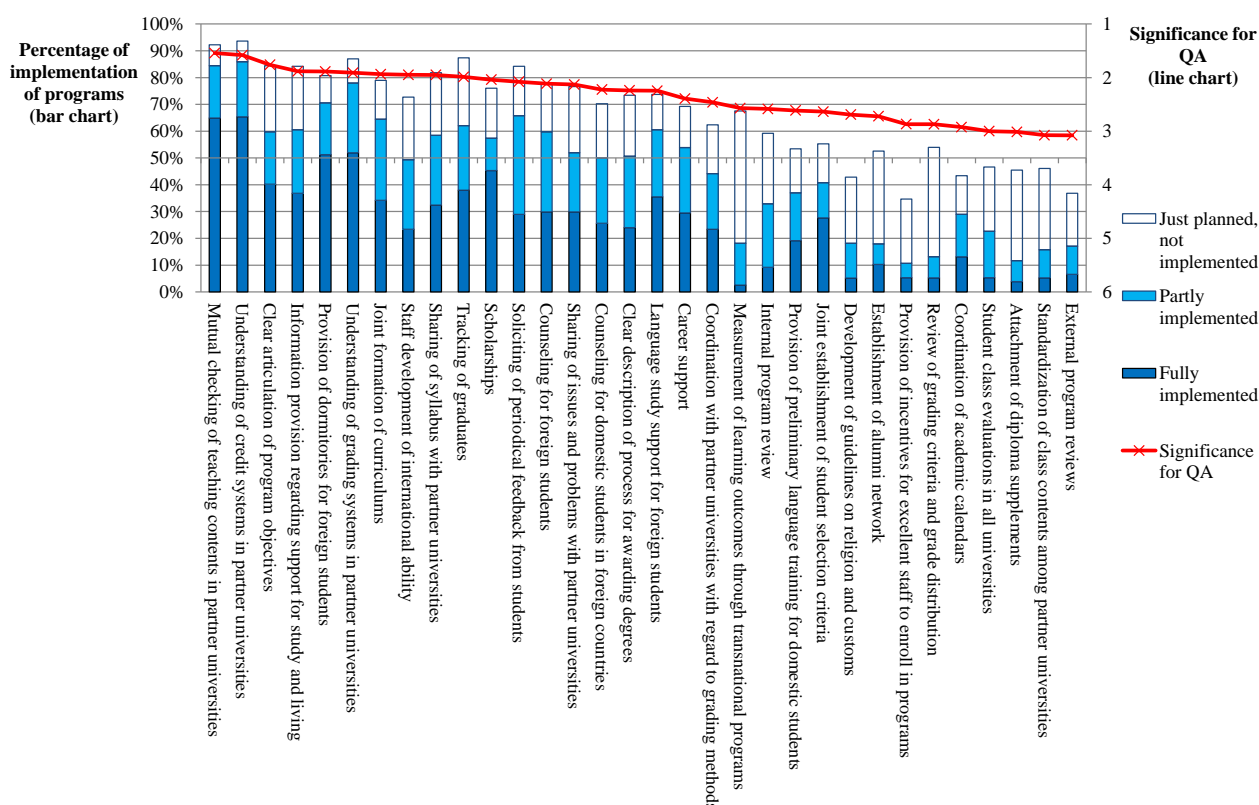


Fig.1 Survey regarding QA activities in joint/double-degree programs

significance of activities for QA (line chart) from 1 (“very significant”) to 6 (“not significant at all”) and the percentage of programs that are implementing the activities (bar chart).

The results show that many universities implemented some significant activities. For example, mutual checking of teaching contents and understanding of credit system are the most important for QA of collaborative activities and more than 80% programs are conducting them. However, there is a big gap between recognition of importance and degree of implementation. This gap was measured by the difference between the percentage of universities that responded with 1 or 2 for significance and that responded that they were “fully” or “partly” implementing activities. The biggest gaps were observed in the activities for measuring learning outcomes on the basis of transnational education, development of staff’s ability on international issues, provision of incentives for excellent academic staff involving in transnational programs, and universities’ review systems for grading of criteria and grade distribution. These activities can be encouraged by disseminating information on good practices.

Table 2 Gap between recognition of importance and degree of implementation

	Recognition of importance (above 5 in 1-6 scale)	Degree of implementation	Gap
Measuring learning outcomes on the basis of transnational education	48.1%	18.2%	29.9%
Development of staff's ability on international issues	75.6%	49.4%	26.3%
Provision of incentives for excellent academic staff involving in transnational programs	35.5%	10.7%	24.9%
Development of guidelines on religion and customs	39.7%	18.2%	21.6%
Universities' review systems for grading of criteria and grade distribution	33.3%	13.2%	20.2%

On the basis of these results, the criteria for monitoring (Table 3) and “examples of good practice” for each criterion (Table 4) were established; universities will use these as reference points for self-analysis. Additionally, universities will be required to rate advancement in quality activities on a four-point scale (“Needs improvement,” “average,” “advanced,” and “highly advanced”) by themselves. Descriptions of each of the four levels of the scale are provided (Table 5) and used by universities as a reference for self-analysis. Universities will be required to concretely explain why their programs should be considered as high quality. In this manner, high quality activities will be encouraged and information on them will be disseminated for outside the ambit of the CAMPUS Asia initiative to use.

Table 3 Monitoring criteria in Japan

Criterion 1: Goals of Academic Program
Criterion 2: Teaching and Learning
2-1: Organization and Staff
2-2: Contents of Academic Program
2-3: Support for Learning and Living
2-4: Credit Transfer and Grading System
Criterion 3: Learning Outcomes
Criterion 4: Internal QA System

Table 4 Example of description for criteria

Criterion 2-2: Contents of Academic Programs	
Do the participating institutions work together in designing the contents and methods of academic program and implementing the program appropriate to achieving the program's goal?	
Examples of good practices	
a) Contents and methods of academic program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The educational contents are configured in line with expected learning outcomes (e.g., student knowledge, skills, and attitudes)—such as a need for global talent within East Asia, and have been systematically analyzed by the institution. • Information on the program contents, especially on curriculum structure and courses offerings, is shared among the participating institutions, with each program component integrated and systematically structured. • It is clear that through international collaboration, the program adds value to education in the participating institutions and enhances their international competitiveness. • Teaching methods effective for meeting the program goals, including internship at overseas companies and public agencies, are adopted. • Education on the languages, cultures and societies of each country is effectively carried out within the program. • Teaching methods, such as offering classes in English, to facilitate learning by international students are introduced. • Teaching modes that facilitate student mobility (e.g., e-learning, joint supervision by dispatching academic staff) are adopted.
b) Student admission	1.....

Table 5 Rubric for Analyzing the Quality Level

	Descriptions
Needs Improvement	Information on curriculum structure and course offerings at each institution is not mutually shared across the participating institutions. The relationship between the program contents and expected learning outcomes is not clear.
Average	Information on curriculum structure and course offerings at each institution is shared across the participating institutions, and the program elements are coordinated. The program content is designed in line with the expected learning outcomes. A teaching method appropriate for the transnational collaborative program is in place.
Advanced	The curriculum is jointly designed by the participating institutions, with contents suited to achieving the program goals. Education meeting program objectives is carried out through international collaboration. Teaching methods effective for internationally collaborative education are introduced. The relationship between the program methods/contents and its learning outcomes is clearly analyzed.
Highly Advanced	The curriculum of the collaborative program is systematically designed to reflect the strengths of each institution. It has been given excellent international features through transnational cooperation. The relationship between the program methods/contents and expected learning outcomes is analyzed and periodically reviewed.

4. Conclusion

For the East Asia region, cooperation for QA of transitional education is a new challenge. Separated but coordinated QA activities may be a modest first step for this region. The possibility that the countries in this region will mutually recognize the results of external QA should be investigated. In addition to cooperative QA activities, developing criteria for transnational education is another new challenge. Evidence-based criteria formation and dissemination of good practices is important for universities to promote high quality activities.